What you can and can’t say about pet products on Instagram

Pet food, treats and supplements can’t claim to treat an animal. Only an authorised vet medicine can.

Use this rulebook: affilo.app/playbooks/pets/use
Read it online: affilo.app/playbooks/pets

A first pass, not legal advice

This playbook sets out the main rules for ads seen in the UK, as we read them on 7 November 2026. It is a starting point for briefing creators, not legal advice. Check your claims with your compliance lead or a lawyer before an ad runs.

Say it’s an ad, up front

`CAP 2` · `Influencer guidance`

Paid or on commission, the post is an ad, and people have to know that before they tap or read on.

Don’t say

- Her new favourite treats #sp
  Flagged by the #ad check · CAP 2
- He goes mad for these #collab
  Flagged by the #ad check · CAP 2

Say instead

- #ad Her new favourite treats
- #ad What goes in his bowl every morning

Put #ad at the start of the caption and turn on Instagram’s paid partnership label too. In Stories, label every frame the product is in.

Food and treats can’t treat disease

`Pet food rules` · `Vet medicines rules`

Only an authorised veterinary medicine can claim to prevent, treat or cure a disease. Food, treats and supplements can’t.

Don’t say

- This cured my dog’s arthritis.
  Flagged by this rulebook · Pet food rules, Vet medicines rules
- Heals itchy skin and ear infections.
  Flagged by this rulebook · Pet food rules, Vet medicines rules

Say instead

- He’s had this every morning for a year.
- She clears the bowl every time.

Prescription medicines can’t be advertised

`Vet medicines rules`

Prescription-only veterinary medicines (POM-V and POM-VPS) can’t be advertised to the public at all.

Don’t say

- Our prescription flea treatment, no vet visit needed.
  Flagged by this rulebook · Vet medicines rules

Don’t claim proof you can’t show

`CAP 3`

Clinically proven, expert recommended and the like need evidence the brand holds before the ad runs, about this product.

Don’t say

- Vet recommended.
  Flagged by this rulebook · CAP 3
- Vets say every dog needs this.
  Flagged by this rulebook · CAP 3

Say instead

- Ask your vet if it suits your dog.

No promises about results

`CAP 3`

Guaranteed, instant or for everyone is likely to mislead. Say what it was like for you.

Don’t say

- Guaranteed results for every dog.
  Flagged by the claims check · CAP 3
  Try: Say what it’s like for you, not for everyone.

Say instead

- What we noticed after a month.

Made with AI? Say so

`CAP 3`

AI-made people, results and testimonials need a label wherever a viewer would take them as real.

Watch for

- An AI-made person giving a testimonial, with nothing to say so
  For your reviewer · CAP 3
- A result the product can’t give, made with AI
  For your reviewer · CAP 3

Instead

- Add a short on-screen line: “Made with AI”.

The rulebook

Sign up as a brand and these lines go on every product you add, ready to edit. Creators see them with the brief, and every script is read against them when it comes in for review.

Lines creators may not say

- Cures, heals or treats any condition
- Arthritis, infection or allergy
- Prescription
- Vet recommended
- Vets say

Lines creators may say

- Every morning for a year

Disclosure #ad

Use this rulebook: affilo.app/playbooks/pets/use

Sources

CAP Code section 2: recognition of marketing communications
An ad must be obviously identifiable as an ad.
www.asa.org.uk/type/non_broadcast/code_section/02.html

CAP Code section 3: misleading advertising
Evidence for objective claims, testimonials, prices and edited images.
www.asa.org.uk/type/non_broadcast/code_section/03.html

Regulation (EC) No 767/2009 on feed, as it applies in Great Britain
Pet food may not claim to prevent, treat or cure a disease.
www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2009/767/contents

The Veterinary Medicines Regulations 2013
Medicinal claims for animals, and which medicines can be advertised to the public.
www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2013/2033/contents

The ASA and CMA guide for influencers on making clear that ads are ads
Where #ad goes, and which labels aren’t enough.
www.asa.org.uk/resource/influencers-guide.html